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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

25 April 1975

WASHINGTON, D C -- Rep Kika de la Garza said this week that South Texas communities wishing to participate in a program under which Federal funds will aid in fire protection programs should make application immediately in order to be eligible during this fiscal year, which ends June 30.

The South Texas Congressman noted that the U S Department of Agriculture has announced funding of \$3.5 million in the 1975 fiscal year for the program. For Texas \$175,000 is available in Federal grants, more than for any other state.

"The program is designed to provide technical and financial assistance to rural communities to organize, train, and equip local forces for fire prevention and suppression," Congressman de la Garza said. "Participating communities will be paid 50 percent of the cost of approved projects. Loans available from the Farmers Home Administration for fire protection in rural communities may be used to supplement Federal grants received under the program."

Rural areas and towns of under 10,000 population in South Texas, which do not now have adequate fire protection and wish to participate in the cost-share program, should apply to Paul R Kramer, Director, Texas Forest Service, College Station, Texas 77843, the Congressman said.

The State Forester will select communities to participate in the program on the basis of vulnerability to fire, adequacy of existing protection, and other factors.

The Congressman said that communities wishing to participate in this year's program should apply not later than June 1.